

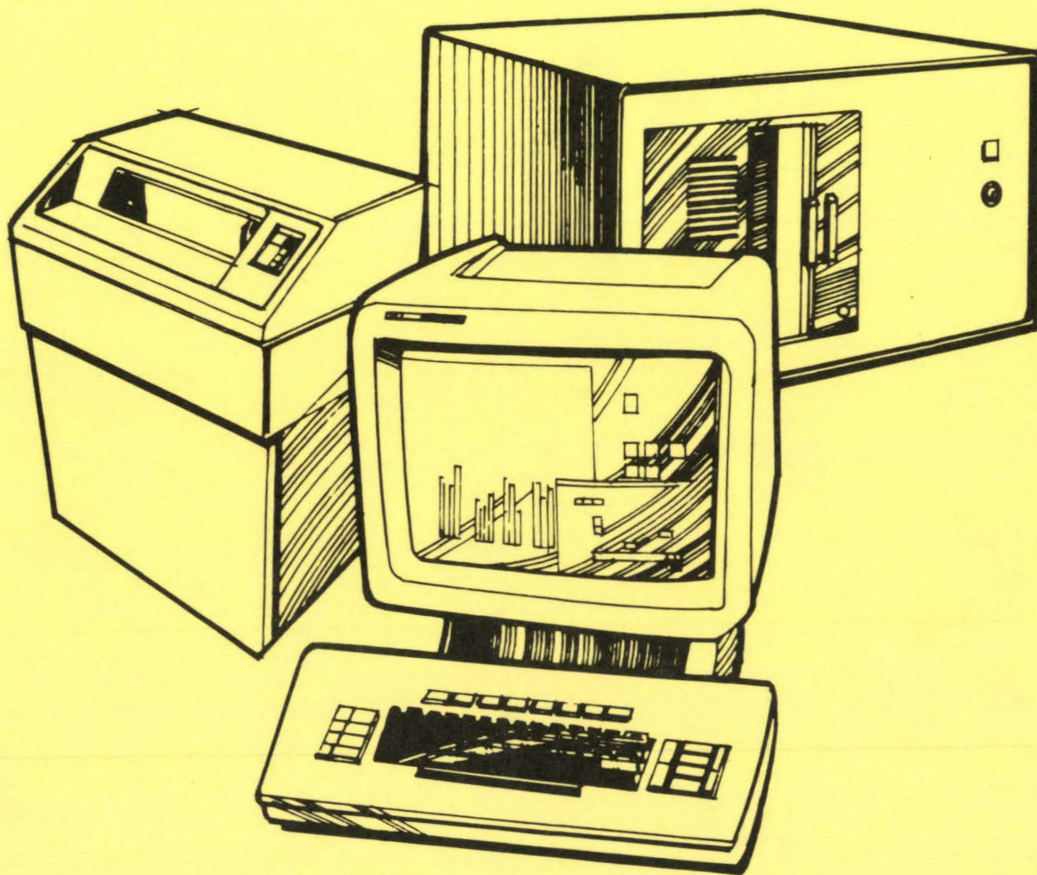
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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington, D.C.



Action Plan for National Systems Management





United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

WO

Reply to: 1300 Management
6600 Systems Management

Date: MAY 18 1984

Subject: Action Plan--National Systems Management Review

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, and WO Staff

REPLY DUE JUNE 30

Here is the Action Plan for implementing the recommendations of the National Systems Management Review. It lists the actions and the corresponding tasks, responsibilities, and expected completion dates.

For those of you listed as responsible for specific items, please involve field personnel as needed to complete the assignments. Also, you are encouraged to utilize the materials in the work group reports used to formulate the final National Systems Management Review report and consult with individuals that were directly involved in the Review. The Washington Office Information Systems Staff has copies of the work group reports.

You are to complete schedules for each of the tasks assigned by June 30. The monitoring group chartered to oversee progress on these action items will be requesting status reports quarterly.

Though these tasks are directed to information management, please remember that our goal is to improve our productivity in on-the-ground resource management, research, and cooperative forestry.

F. Dale Robertson

FDR R. MAX PETERSON
Chief

Enclosure

Limited Distribution



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Chief's Basic Principles and Guidelines
April 11, 1984

Implementing the National Systems Management Review Team recommendations will create change at each organizational level. Those changes will be guided by the following basic principles and guidelines:

1. The Forest Service mission will not change just because we implement new technologies. Our purpose is to provide new technologies to our employees to accomplish their jobs more efficiently.
2. New technologies will be used to support and reinforce decision making at the most appropriate level. The Forest Service will basically remain a decentralized organization without significant shift in responsibilities or delegation of authority.
3. Forest Service employees are the agency's most important resource. We intend to capitalize on opportunities to increase efficiency and job satisfaction by using new technologies. This will enable employees to devote more time to the challenging parts of their jobs that are directly related to the agency's mission.
4. The Forest Service is committed to the timely training of personnel to enable them to use new technology. The entire organization needs to understand the purpose and functions of these innovations so we can make the best use of them.
5. We must all manage information technology with a high degree of cost consciousness. Decisions to commit people and machines to supply information must reflect consideration of the real need, cost/benefits and efficiency.
6. Each organizational level will determine its information requirements. That needed beyond these will be negotiated between each level. While some information will be readily available throughout the organization, other will require local interpretation before it is used. Access to sensitive data will be restricted.
7. Inevitably, as we replace old work methods with new, some duplication and problems will arise. We will make every effort to minimize such difficulties and frustrations by solving emerging problems and moving through the transition as quickly as possible.

8. Cooperation with other agencies and organizations is important in carrying out the Forest Service mission. We will increase opportunities to improve information sharing and networking.
9. We will encourage personnel to be creative in using new technologies to efficiently accomplish Forest Service work.
10. We will establish standards and guidelines for collection, storage, manipulation, use, and disposal of information to minimize duplication and costs.
11. Productivity gains and savings from using new technologies will be captured and shifted to on-the-ground resource management and research.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Chief, R. Max Peterson, requested a comprehensive review of information management in the Forest Service in 1983. A National Systems Management Review (NSMR) Team, chaired by Regional Forester Jean Hassell, completed the review in 1984. Over 100 employees, including the Review Team, work groups and support personnel were directly involved in this effort. Countless others throughout the organization contributed in various ways.

The NSMR Team report, including 33 recommendations, was presented to the Chief & Staff in January, 1984. During an Executive workshop on information management in February, 1984, the Chief & Staff, Regional Foresters, Area and Station Directors approved 28 of the recommendations unconditionally and either modified or clarified the remainder. This Action Plan contains their decisions for implementation. The National Systems Review Report was accepted, printed and distributed to the organization.

Purpose

This Action Plan outlines the primary tasks for moving the Forest Service ahead in information and systems management for increasing our productivity in on-the-ground resource management, research, and cooperative forestry.

Implementation

Responsibilities:

Those assigned specific tasks will prepare schedules for accomplishment and report progress to the Monitoring Group.

Considerations:

1. Involve personnel and utilize the work from the NSMR.
2. Coordinate and tie with current activities (i.e., PIT; Admin. Study; WO Information Requirements; etc.)
3. Operate within existing structure where practical.

Monitoring:

A group has been designated to track implementation of the decisions over the next 2 years. Membership is:

Associate Chief	-	Dale Robertson
Regional Forester	-	Jim Torrence
Station Director	-	Eldon Ross
Associate Deputy Chief	-	Rex Hartgraves
WO Staff Director	-	Sotero Muniz

ACTION # 1

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Define line responsibilities and establish processes and standards for managing information.

Strengthen existing policies regarding information flow

Support principles of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity

Assign responsibility for development of local systems to line managers

Acquire appropriate "generic" software before developing new local systems

Identify specialized technical needs

Work toward standardization of equipment and procedures

DISCUSSION: Develop policy, perspective and national expectations for distributed information processing technologies.

Develop processes establishing information needs, standards and coordination.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Translate NSMR recommendations into appropriate FSM structure (A1 and A2 work group reports)	InS	11/15/84
Approve	C&S	12/1/84
Develop an analysis process for information	InS	2/1/85
Establish standards for information mgmt	InS	4/1/85
Revise FSM 1400 to assure management reviews include information management	AM	11/84

ACTION # 2

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Assign primary responsibility for National Systems Management to the Associate Deputy Chief for Administration (Systems)

Assign to the Associate Deputy Chief's responsibility for application of systems technology to their program areas

DISCUSSION: New roles and responsibilities will be drafted that assign duties to the Associate Deputy Chiefs. These will be reviewed and approved by Chief and Staff.

ASSIGNED TO: Associate Deputy Chiefs

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Translate the Systems Review Team recommendations into the appropriate FSM structure	Admin - Assoc Dpty - Systems	11/15/84
Approval/decision	C&S	12/1/84

ACTION # 3

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Clarify roles of CS&T and InS staffs

DISCUSSION: Expected roles of both staffs have been described as part of the System Review Team report. Existing programs and organization of both staffs need to be examined and changed as appropriate.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Translate NSMR recommendation into appropriate action	CS&T/InS	11/15/84
Approval	C&S	12/1/84
Revise FSM as appropriate	CS&T/InS	2/1/85

ACTION # 4

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Modify NFC role

DISCUSSION: Clarify the support requirements the Forest Service has for NFC.

- o The NFC should continue to handle payment, payroll and collection systems; general ledger accounting; and other special financial reports.
- o Code of responsibilities for electronic submission of payment and collection transactions.
- X o Needed Forest Service financial and personnel information should be maintained with primary data bases at field locations.
- o Work closely with the Department to implement systematic workload forecasting.

Charter a National Team to monitor the transition and implementation of systematic workload forecasting.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Initiate dialogue of FLIPS plans with NFC and USDA representatives	Adm - Assoc Dpty - Systems	7/1/84
X Establish three person National Team to coordinate NFC,FS,USDA communications	Adm - Assoc Dpty - Systems	8/1/84
Establish FS conversion efforts for property, personnel, fiscal, and procurement systems	PM/FISAC/AS	9/1/84
Review hardware procurement plans currently underway for consistency with Data General Equipment	CS&T	8/1/84
Develop action plan for coupling linking NFC with the Forest Service Information Systems	Adm - Assoc Dpty - Systems	11/1/84

ACTION # 5

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Clarify division of labor between FCCC and FLIPS

DISCUSSION: Charter a national management group to clarify the role & mix of computing facilities.

This group may also manage the transition.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Charter management group	Admin Assoc Depty -Systems	7/1/84
Develop mix standards	Mgmt Group Adm-Systems	10/1/84
Charter Transition Management Group	Monitoring Group	11/1/84
Recommended composition: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems) - chairman CS&T - Director NFS Planning - Director NFS Resources - Staff Director Regional Director of Management Systems USDA Director of OIRM USDA Director of FCCC		meet on established basis
Review need for group continuance	Adm Assoc Dpty - Systems	12/85

ACTION # 6

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Review detached units and relocate as appropriate

DISCUSSION: Each Deputy complete a review of existing detached units.

After review is completed and conclusions validated by the Deputy Chiefs, results are presented to C&S for decision.

Detached units no longer need to be justified by systems development considerations.

ASSIGNED TO: Deputy Chiefs

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Draft new FSM policy	AM	9/1/84
Establish review process	Deputy Chiefs	10/1/84
Approve policy, agree on review, direct deputies	C&S	11/1/84
Decision on results	C&S	2/1/85

ACTION # 7

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Identify ways to increase productivity.

DISCUSSION: There are existing processes that examine the efficiency and effectiveness of Forest Service activities for their potential to increase productivity. These processes need to be examined to insure distributed information technologies are included.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Examine existing productivity improvement studies (PIT) and analysis processes for inclusion of information management technologies	Assoc. Deputy Chiefs	
Personnel		9/30/84
Procurement		9/30/84
Budget		9/30/84
Other Business Mgmt.		9/30/84
Centralization		7/31/84
Timber Sale Evaluation		9/17/84
Collections		10/1/84
Fleet Management		10/15/84
Slash		11/5/84
Revise existing methods as appropriate and present to C&S	Assoc. Deputy Chiefs	as identified

ACTION # 8

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Plan a national dramatic event and regional forums

Support principles of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity

Involve field (Ranger District/Research Work Unit) level early in FLIPS/
planning and training

DISCUSSION: The Chief, Staff and selected line officers servicewide
will share the Chief's vision for the information age in the
Forest Service.

ASSIGNED TO: Chief

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Conduct a National dramatic event	Chief	2/28/84
Brief WO staff directors	Monitoring Group	4/12/84
Develop a National policy/vision	Chief	4/1/84
Hold a National Information Mgmt Workshop	InS	2/15/85
Hold Regional Forums (Chief and/or Assoc Chief)	R/A/S	8/1/84
Conduct local forums as appropriate	unit mgrs	12/1/84

ACTION # 9

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Modify personnel policies as necessary

DISCUSSION: Certain personnel policies will be affected by the Systems Review recommendations

Once these policies are identified they may need to be modified assuring consistency

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Determine, affected FSM policies	PM	7/1/84
Revise FSM	PM	12/1/84

ACTION # 10

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Provide the appropriate work environment and training

Involve field (Ranger District/Research Work Unit) level early in FLIPS planning and training

DISCUSSION: Units will be responsible to develop necessary activities at their locations to prepare employees to assume their new functions in information mgmt.

Appropriate activities will include identification of the physical, psychological, and organization barriers to making and managing change in the organization.

Should use existing office automation skills in the organization.

ASSIGNED TO: R/A/S
Administration Associate Deputy
TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Develop local activites/programs	R/A/S AM/PM	9/11/84

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Motivate and reward employees

DISCUSSION: Examine processes for rewarding and motivating employees
in light of new distributed technologies

Use membership from the Systems Review Team work group in action
plan development.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Develop appropriate National actions to initiate NSMR recommendations	PM	10/1/84

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Foster employee home and travel use of computers

DISCUSSION: Identify barriers, reduce or eliminate them and then make it possible for employees to acquire compatible hardware/software.

Formal policy is needed.

Rely on System Review Team Employee Readiness work group as well as CS&T and AS.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Identify barriers (support from AS/CS&T)	PM	7/1/84
Identify potential for compatibility and and barrier reduction	PM	8/1/84
Develop alternatives	PM	9/1/84
Present to C&S	PM	11/1/84
Develop FSM policy	PM	2/1/85

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Determine Research's responsibility in developing, distributing, and maintaining data bases and software

Identify specialized technical needs

DISCUSSION: Responsibility and procedures for maintenance and updating data bases/software must be established clearly in technology transfer plans.

Coordination will be required with State and Private Forestry.

ASSIGNED TO: Research - Associate Deputies

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Review responsibilities & procedures with S&PF	Research Associates	8/1/84
Identify specialized technical needs within NFS	Assoc. Deputy Chiefs(NFS)	9/1/84
Report/decision	C&S	10/1/84

ACTION # 14

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Establish a library of broadly useful programs

DISCUSSION: Regional libraries should be maintained, but they should be linked to form a national systems library, accessible by the Forest Service and its cooperators.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Develop a National library for software exchange	CS&T	1/1/85

ACTION # 15

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Continue to allow use of external computing facilities

DISCUSSION: Existing policy needs to be re-affirmed, strengthened then
delegated

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Review existing FSM direction	CS&T	9/1/84
Validate or change as necessary	CS&T	11/1/84
Approval	C&S	1/15/85

ACTION # 16

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Streamline procurement procedures

DISCUSSION: Both Associate Deputy Chief's direct the review of existing procurement procedures and make necessary changes.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Review existing procurement policies	CS&T/AS	7/1/84
Develop new policies and delegations	CS&T/AS	9/1/84
Approval	C&S	11/1/84

ACTION # 17

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Explore all possible research applications of distributed processing

DISCUSSION: There is a need for a specific examination of Research's needs for distributed processing.

ASSIGNED TO: Research - Associate Deputy Chiefs

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Identify potential specialized research distributed processing requirements	Research - Assoc Dpty	7/1/84
Evaluate potential list	Research - Assoc Dpty	9/1/84
Select appropriate applications	Research - Assoc Dpty	11/1/84
Approve for implementation	C&S	2/1/84

ACTION # 18

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Establish a National, standardized bibliographic data base

DISCUSSION: Actions are currently underway in this area. The recommendations from the Systems Review Report need to be included.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Include appropriate actions into current Scientific/technical information program review	InS	7/1/84
Approval	C&S	9/1/84

ACTION # 20

NSMR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Work with cooperators to increase opportunities to improve networking and information sharing

Consider providing special services to cooperators

Plan software development and procurement to facilitate information exchange with cooperators

Clarify, consolidate, and expand, where necessary, Forest Service policies on cooperative agreements in systems management

DISCUSSION: Examine existing cooperative operations along with technical requirements then make appropriate changes.

ASSIGNED TO: State and Private Forestry - Associate Deputy Chief

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Translate NSMR recommendations into appropriate FSM direction	S&PF Assoc - Deputy	9/1/84

ACTION # 19

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Establish "user friendly" security procedures to prevent unauthorized use of systems

DISCUSSION: Examine security requirements in light of current and future direction as well as the newly acquired distributed processing technologies.

ASSIGNED TO: Administration - Associate Deputy (Systems)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Draft revised FSM direction	CS&T	8/1/84
Approval	C&S	11/1/84

ACTION # 21

NSMR RECOMMENDATION:

Monitor the implementation of the Systems Managment Review Team Report

DISCUSSION: Establish a line oriented monitoring group to monitor the implementation of the NSMR recommendations. Information Systems Staff will provide support. At the end of two years, the group will determine the need for continuation.

ASSIGNED TO: Associate Chief (Chairman)

TASKS

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Draft charter and Implementation plan	InS	4/1/84
Review and validate plan	M.Grp	4/15/84
Approval	C&S	5/7/84
Distribute plan, begin implementation	M.Grp	5/15/84
First quarter review	M.Grp	10/84
First report to RF&D's	M.Grp	1/85
Second quarter review	M.Grp	4/85
Second report to RF&D's	M.Grp	6/85
Third quarter review	M.Grp	7/85
Fourth quarter review	M.Grp	10/85

Crosswalk

National Systems Management Review Recommendation	Action #
LEADERSHIP	
Define Line Responsibilities and Establish Processes and Standards For Managing Information	1
Identify Ways to Increase Productivity	7
Strengthen Existing Policies Information Flow	1
Clarify Roles of Computer Sciences and Telecommunications (CS&T) and Information Systems (InS) Groups	3
Review Detached Units and Relocate as Appropriate	6
EMPLOYEE READINESS	
Plan a National Dramatic Event and Regional Forums	8
Provide the Appropriate Work Environment and Training	10
Support Principles of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity	1,8
Motivate and Reward Employees	11
Foster Employee Home and Travel Use of Computers	12
Modify Personnel Policies as Necessary	9
Involve Field (Ranger District/Research Work Unit) Level Early in FLIPS Planning and Training	8,10
SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION	
Assign Responsibility for Development of Local Systems to Line Managers	1
Acquire Appropriate Generic" Software before Developing New Local Systems	1
Establish a Library of Broadly useful Programs	14
Determine Research's Responsibility in Developing, Distributing, and Maintaining Data Bases and Software	13
Assign Primary Responsibility for National Systems Management to the Associate Deputy Chief for Administration for Systems	2
Assign to the other Associate Deputy Chiefs Responsibility for Application of Systems Technology to their Respective Program Areas	2

National Systems Management Review
Recommendation

Action #

COMPUTER CENTERS

Clarify Division of Labor between FCCC and FLIPS 5

Modify NFC Role 4

Continue to Allow use of External Computing Facilities 15

RESEARCH AND OTHER TECHNICAL APPLICATIONS

Streamline Procurement Procedures 16

Identify Specialized Technical Needs 1,13

Explore all Possible Research Applications of Distributed Processing 17

Establish a National, Standardized Bibliographic Data Base 18

COOPERATORS

Work Toward Standardization of Equipment and Procedures 1

Work with Cooperators to Increase Opportunities to Improve Networking and Information Sharing 20

Consider Providing Special Services to Cooperators 20

Plan Software Development and Procurement to Facilitate Information Exchange with Cooperators 20

Establish "User Friendly" Security Procedures to Prevent Unauthorized Use of Systems 19

Clarify, Consolidate, and Expand, Where Necessary, Forest Service Policies on Cooperative Agreements in Systems Management 20

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Information Systems Staff prepare a detail implementation plan that lays out all aspects of each action to be taken 21

A small group be created to monitor progress of the implementation 21